

we have an opportunity for the first time since the Eisenhower administration to balance the budget without touching the Social Security Trust Fund. Congress needs to stand on principle. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations.

For too many years, these budget negotiations did not create such a fuss. Congress and the President settled their differences the old-fashioned way: They simply spent more money. When spending exceeded revenues, they borrowed money first from the Social Security Trust Fund, then from the public, by issuing government bonds. Forty years later we have run up one heck of a tab. Our Federal debt now stands at over \$5 trillion.

There is hope. The Republican Congress over the past 5 years has been more serious than ever about fiscal discipline. That, coupled with a strong national economy, have put our Federal Government in the black for the first time in a generation and allowed us to retire \$130 billion in Federal debt. The next step is crucial. Congress and the President need to keep their hands out of the Social Security cookie jar. It is too important to our future and to our country.

The Federal Government will raise about \$1.7 trillion this year in non-Social Security revenue. This really ought to be enough to operate our government. Americans are likely to hear some hysterics coming out of our Nation's capital during the next couple of weeks over whether we should spend more money on this or that program. These decisions are important, but my focus will be on the bigger picture: Can we get through this session without robbing Social Security and future generations?

We must end the year by holding the line on spending, force some savings, and stay out of the Social Security Trust Fund. It is a matter of principle worth fighting for.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION AGREEING TO CONFERENCE REQUESTED BY SENATE ON H.R. 2990, QUALITY CARE FOR THE UNINSURED ACT OF 1999

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-430) on the resolution (H. Res. 348) agreeing to the conference requested by the Senate on the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2990) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals greater access to health insurance through a health care tax deduction, a long-term care deduction, and other health-related tax incentives, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to provide access to and choice in health care through association health plans, to amend the Public Health Service Act to create new pooling op-

portunities for small employers to obtain greater access to health coverage through HealthMarts; to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage; and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOHN LOMBARDI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to pay tribute to one of the most progressive leaders in the history of Florida, Dr. John Lombardi. He has been a cherished friend to me for over the past 10 years, but he has also been a great friend to the University of Florida and the rest of the State. He is a passionate supporter of public education and he is also a refreshing thinker.

I have been able to count on Dr. Lombardi for so many years as a valuable friend and resource person. Though Dr. Lombardi is leaving his position as President of the University of Florida, he will still be a part of the University's community. We will continue to count on him as a resource.

As a graduate of the University of Florida, I am proud of all the work he has done to make the University of Florida one of the finest public universities in the country, and the best football team. His hard work has helped us reach new levels of academic achievement and we are all proud of his commitment.

I know that the State of Florida is grateful to Dr. Lombardi for being so dedicated in his advocacy for equal rights and a quality education for all of our students. We will miss his leadership, but we will count on his continued support and guidance.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

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Mr. Speaker, Dr. John Lombardi represented and carried through a renaissance in Florida's public education. He chartered a new course for a university which many times before him was in a sleepy existence.

Dr. Lombardi came along; he was a university president who had vision and he had foresight. He was a scholar, respected. He was an academic, yet he was very well-centered in the community, as well as the students. He pulled

this university up in research and development. He shaped and defined a new direction for the university.

I had quite a few meetings with President Lombardi. I respected him, as I was a member of the Florida Senate Committee on High Education. I must say to the graduates and the students of the University of Florida, John Lombardi will be missed; and to that entire university system, he brought them into the 21st century kicking and screaming. We are hoping that they will be able to replace him. But I say, no, it is hard to replace a man with the genius and heart of a John Lombardi.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN LOMBARDI

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUYKENDALL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. FOWLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my best wishes and appreciation to an outstanding educator, administrator, and author, Dr. John Lombardi, who has been the president of the University of Florida for more than 9 years now, and in that time he has become much beloved by the student body, faculty, and alumni. This is a man who truly made a difference during his years as president.

It would take too long to list all of his many accomplishments, so I would like to highlight just a few.

As an educator, Dr. Lombardi focused on and achieved higher academic standards, student performance, and graduation rates. As an administrator, he took care of critical details, such as offering better access to computers and augmenting opportunities by increasing the number of combined degree programs available to undergraduates. He was intricately involved in the opening of the Brain Institute, a premier center dedicated to brain and spinal cord research and treatment.

He also excelled in the vitally important role as a fund-raiser, with gifts to the University increasing exponentially during his tenure, including a recently arranged multimillion dollar contribution to the law school.

In addition, Dr. Lombardi was responsible for Florida's acceptance into the Association of American Universities, the prestigious higher education organization comprised of the top 62 public and private institutions in the United States.

More important, though, was Dr. Lombardi the person, a person of great popularity and high regard. Let me just give my colleagues two examples.

Dr. Lombardi was so well-loved by the students that I know that recently the student body voted to ask the Board of Regents to allow Dr. Lombardi to sign each of their diplomas.